

Cuba Reported Sending Arms to British Guiana

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Fidel Castro has begun shipping arms received from Soviet Russia to his Communist admirer, Prime Minister Cheddi Jagan of British Guiana, informed Government sources disclosed today.

Two shiploads of arms reportedly left the Cuban port of Mariel recently for Georgetown in British Guiana.

A United States Government official said the Guianese described the arms as "old United States rifles needed for training purposes." However, it was considered unlikely that Dr. Jagan would settle for obsolete equipment with so many new Czech arms already in possession of Communist Cuba.

An Avowed Communist

This was the first confirmed case of what the United States has long warned — that Mr. Castro would use his island as a transshipment point for arms to Communists everywhere south of the Rio Grande.

British Guiana, about the size of Kansas, lies on the southern rim of the Caribbean, 1,400 miles east of the Panama Canal — nearly twice as far

from the waterway as Havana.

Dr. Jagan, who is of East Indian descent and a dentist, has long clamored for independence for his humid and poverty stricken land. The 48-year-old Prime Minister is an avowed Communist and an open admirer of both Soviet Premier Khrushchev and Mr. Castro.

Dr. Jagan heads the Red-dominated Peoples Progressive Party in the colony. Its greatest membership is among the East Indians who were brought to the colony years ago to work in the sugar fields and have remained to become British Guiana's farmers and shopkeepers.

He is bitterly opposed along racial lines by many of the colony's Negroes, led by anti-Communist Linden Forbes Burnham. The white, Chinese

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and Portuguese peoples who form minority groups there, also oppose Dr. Jagan's policies. About 48 per cent of the colony's half million people are East Indian and 42 per cent are Negroes with the Asians having a greater birth rate.

Jungle Training Camps

The British retain control of Guiana's defense and foreign policy, but the country is run by a constitution granted in 1961. This provided for an elective legislature with veto powers reserved to a crown-appointed governor, Sir Ralph Francis Gray. Full independence, however, long has been withheld with the United Kingdom apparently determined to wait until there is a non-Communist government there.

A British official recalled that there have been reports over a period of more than a year that Dr. Jagan has provided jungle training camps for Mr. Castro, that there are missile bases in the jungle back country and that as many as 2,000 Cuban "tourists" have been seen in British Guiana.

"We don't dismiss these reports," he said. "We just don't have any evidence that they are true. The point is, we have got troops there and we are still in charge."

There is considerable commerce between Cuba and the crown colony since British Guiana supplies Cuba with rice. However, the ships, in general, come to the colony in ballast.

Guianese Called 'Docile'

The official said he could not imagine who Dr. Jagan would train with the reported weapons from Cuba. The most dangerous elements there are members of the Guianese United Youth movement. The official said these are leather-jacketed youths who "roar" about on motor bikes.

The Guianese, he said, are a docile people who fear and dislike the jungle interior and are well content to live in the heavily populated coastal zone. They would not be likely, he added, to go into the back country in revolt.

"Revolt against whom?" he asked. "After all, they (Dr. Jagan's supporters) are the government. The average member of Jagan's PPP party is not attracted by Communist or Marxist beliefs. There is such a clique, however, and Jagan is capable of considerable mischief just to remain in the limelight."

Dr. Jagan visited Washington in 1961 and, after calling on the President, received some United States aid largely in the form of technical surveys of the underdeveloped country.